



Strategies for Writing Standards

3rd – 5th Grades

Developed By:
Illinois State Board of Education
English Language Arts Content
Specialists

Illinois State Board of Education
www.isbe.net
100 N. 1st Street • Springfield, IL 62777
100 W. Randolph, Suite 14-300 • Chicago, IL 60601

Forming An Opinion

Targeted Standards:

W.3.1 – Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons.

W.4.1 -- Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.

W.5.1 – Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.

Procedure:

1. Clear space in the classroom so that students may stand anywhere from one side of the classroom to the other. Label one side of the classroom “strongly agree” and the other side “strongly disagrees”.
2. Present students with a statement such as:
 - Children should not be able to eat sugary breakfast cereal.
 - Dogs should be kept on a leash.
 - People who own cats should keep them indoors.
 - In order to reduce air pollution, people should ride buses rather than driving cars.
 - Children should be paid for doing chores at home.
 - Cell phones should be turned off during the school day.
3. Give students some think time to reflect on their position. (Model what they should be reflecting upon).
4. After you have read the statement, have students SILENTLY position themselves along the imaginary classroom line to show where they stand on the issue.
5. Have students then orally state their position to the class. After each student states their position, give classmates an opportunity to shift their position on the continuum.

Possible Opinion Stems:

“I strongly agree/disagree with the statement because I think....”

“I agree/disagree somewhat with the statement because I feel.... On the other hand I also know....”

“I want to convince you to agree/disagree with the statement because I think...”

“An important reason to consider my point of view is...”

6. Continue this process until as many opinions have been heard as possible. Chart these so students can use them for reference on possible classroom tasks.
7. This activity can be used as a pre-writing activity when writing an opinion piece.

Attachment/Resources:

N/A

Reference/Research:

Prior, J. (2000). *Write time for kids: Nonfiction reading and writing program*. Westminster, CA: Teacher Created Materials.

Color Coding an Opinion

Targeted Standards:

W.3.1 – Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons.

W.4.1 -- Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.

W.5.1 – Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.

Procedure:

The following strategy is helpful to use prior to having students write an opinion piece. Students need to see samples of opinion writing as well as modeled examples before they are equipped to write opinion pieces.

1. Provide students with a sample piece of writing where an opinion is stated.
2. Establish a color coding system such as:
Blue: Opinion statement
Yellow: Reasons supporting opinion
3. Guide students to highlight the sample using the above coding system.
4. If color coding is not possible, consider circling, underlining, numbering, or using annotation symbols. (Students can star* the opinion and number the reasons, etc...)
5. This process will help students identify structures of opinion writing.

Attachments/Resources:

Samples of student writing can be found at:

<http://www.thewritesource.com/> - Click on Student Models

http://www.corestandards.org/assets/Appendix_C.pdf

Reference/Research:

Adapted from Zwiers, J. (2004). *Developing academic thinking skills in grades 6-12*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

SPAR

Targeted Standards:

W.3.1 –Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons.

W.4.1 - Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.

W.5.1 –Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.

Procedure:

(Model this strategy before having students participate in SPAR.)

1. Have students select a position on a topic from a hat so that half of the students support one position and the other half support the other position. Have students move their desks so they are sitting opposite an opponent.
2. Give students one to two minutes to write down their opinion with evidence for their position.
3. Provide each side an opportunity to talk together to add to their evidence. This will help weaker students be prepared to comment.
4. The students will be “SPARing” with the person sitting across from them. Each student presents a one-minute opening statement making his/her case while the other listens quietly and takes notes.
5. Give students 30 seconds to prepare ideas for what they want to say to their opponent. Invite each side to engage in a three-minute discussion during which they may question their opponent’s reasoning or examples or put forth new ones of their own.
6. Give students 30 seconds or one minute to prepare a closing statement. Each student presents, a one-minute closing statement while the other listens quietly, and then the roles reverse.

Note:

SPAR can be modified to include time for students to gather more evidence to support their positions. Research can be as informal as giving students time to look through their notes (possibly as a homework assignment the night before) or can be as extensive as a formal research project.

Attachments/Resources:

N/A

Reference/Research:

Adapted and retrieved from <https://www.facinghistory.org/for-educators/educator-resources/teaching-strategies/spar-spontaneous-argumentatio>

Brainstorm: BME

Targeted Standards:

W.3.2 – Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

W.4.2 -- Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

W.5.2 -- Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

Students are accustomed to thinking in terms of beginning, middle and end when writing narratives. They can use the same thought process when writing informational/explanatory texts.

Procedure:

1. Tell students to look at the chart below. (Provide students with a copy of the organizer or show organizer on a Smart board or whiteboard.)
2. Model for students with a topic such as “Tsunamis”. Model how you will list in the brainstorming section all the information you want to include.
3. Next, read through each item on the brainstormed list and think about where it should go in the paper: the beginning, middle or end.
4. Demonstrate this in front of students by using arrows to show where each bit of information belongs – the beginning, middle, or end.

Brainstorming	Beginning	Middle	End
Tsunamis are tidal waves	→		
How to prepare		→	
Move very fast	→		
Scientists trying to develop warning systems			→

Attachment/Resources:

N/A

Reference/Research:

Murray, D. M. (2005). *Write to learn* (8th ed.). Boston, MA: Thomson/Wadsworth, OP.

Sketch-to-Stretch

Targeted Standards:

W.3.2 – Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

W.4.2 -- Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

W.5.2 -- Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

Sketch-to-Stretch is an instructional strategy (Harste, Short, & Burke, 1988) where students draw quick sketches to stretch their thinking and understanding of concepts. This technique can be used in a variety of ways.

Procedure:

1. Read or listen to a text or chunk of text.
2. Tell students to think about what they read. Think about questions and ideas they have about the text.
3. Students should sketch those ideas.

Variations:

- As a pre-reading activity, Sketch-to-Stretch is a strategy that can help students connect with prior knowledge. Students sketch ideas that show what they know about a topic featured in an upcoming selection.
- Invite students to write captions (words, phrases, or sentences) for sketches.
- When students work in small groups, Sketch-to-Stretch can be used to illustrate a series of events. For example, each person in a group sketches a different phase in the life cycle of a monarch butterfly.
- Put all the sketches in a booklet or on display so that students can examine all of them for new insights.
- If a text has few, none, or very poor illustrations, it may not be necessary to tell the readers to put away their texts before sketching. In fact leaving the text open in such cases encourages readers to reread as they devise their sketches.
- With content materials, give readers copies of a passage minus the pictures, drawings, graphs. Then ask them to sketch. Readers can then compare their sketches with one another and the author.

Attachment/Resources:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qHohm42Vg5U> – Video of teacher using Sketch to Stretch while students listen to a read aloud.

http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/lesson_images/lesson229/sketch.pdf

Sketch to Stretch template

Reference/Research:

Harste, J. C., & Short, K. G. (1988). *Creating classrooms for authors: The reading-writing connection*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Split Screen Notes Organizer

Targeted Standards:

W.3.2 – Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

W.4.2 -- Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

W.5.2 -- Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

This strategy gives students an organizer to record what they have learned visually as well as with words. Listening to or reading text twice will show students that rereading is important in order to comprehend the text fully.

Procedure:

1. The teacher will read aloud or assign students to read an informational text silently.
2. Students will record notes and draw visual representations of the text.
3. The teacher will read aloud or assign students to read the informational text again.
4. Students will continue to add drawings or notes to their organizer.
5. Have the students meet in groups to discuss their drawings and notes.
6. Students can use the organizer to write a summary or report about the topic.

Spiders	
Notes	Drawings

Variation:

The split screen organizer can be set up for texts with multiple subtopics.

Simple Machines		
Topic	Notes	Drawings
Lever		
Pulley		
Wedge		

Attachment/Resources:

N/A

Reference/Research:

Brownlie, F., & Close, S. (1990). *Tomorrow's classroom today: strategies for creating active readers, writers, and thinkers*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Writer's Workshop Agreement

Targeted Standards:

W.3.2 – Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

W.4.2 -- Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

W.5.2 -- Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

As teachers engage students in writer's workshop, it can be helpful to have a set of writer's workshop agreements for what students should be doing during writer's workshop. This promotes clear expectations about writing time and what writers should do.

Procedure:

1. Create the agreement in poster format and add to it each time you model one of the writing behaviors you want to encourage during the workshop time. The poster can also contain "don't" items to remind students of behaviors that are not acceptable during writer's workshop.
2. In the beginning of the year, there might only be one or two items on the list—but by the end of the year, it will be filled with positive expectations for writers workshop.
3. Another benefit of having a posted list of expectations and agreements is that if the sound level gets a bit high, you can ask writers to pause and hold up the number of fingers that indicates the item on the chart that best identifies their focus.
4. For example, a writer who is illustrating will hold up three fingers. A writer who is researching will hold up four fingers.
5. Writers who are not engaged in their writing or have slipped into the "Don't" category must refocus on the list of agreements and get quickly back on task.

During Writing Time	
Do:	
1. Write	
2. Think	
3. Draw	
4. Research	
5. Read	
6. Work with a partner to improve your research or writing.	
7. Edit your work	
Don't:	
1. Interrupt a teacher conference	
2. Make choices that won't improve your writing	

Attachment/Resources:

N/A

Reference/Research:

Stead, T., & Hoyt, L. (2012). *Explorations in nonfiction writing*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Postcard: Mini-Narratives

Targeted Standards:

W.3.3 – Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

W.4.3 – Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

W.5.3 -- Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

This strategy gives students practice in organizing narratives in clear sequences. Students will write mini-narratives from picture postcards.

Procedure:

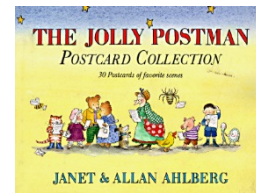
Postcards can be written from real experiences such as recounting an event in school or vacation or weekend. Students could make their own using a photo or drawing of that experience.

The following is an idea to use postcards to narrate an imagined experience.

1. Distribute postcards to students. (One postcard per student is ideal.)
2. Have students locate the caption on the postcard.
3. Teacher should model how to write a postcard message and how to address a postcard.
4. Ask students to rough-draft three or four sentences (on scrap paper) for the “postcard message” that narrate in sequence an event related to the picture on the postcard.
5. Have students take the edited sentences and write on the actual postcard.
6. Students may address and send the postcards.

Variations:

- Use the book *The Jolly Postman* by Janet & Allan Ahlberg to give examples of what postcards are and how they are structured
- Students may create a postcard based on a unit of study. Some examples include regions, planets, cultural celebrations, historical landmarks, etc.



Attachment/Resources:

N/A

Reference/Research:

Adapted from McCarthy, T. (1998). *Narrative writing: mini-lessons, strategies, activities*. New York, NY: Scholastic Professional Books.

Story Map

Targeted Standards:

W.3.3 – Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons.

W.4.3 – Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

W.5.3 -- Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

A story map uses a graphic organizer to help students learn the elements of a book or story. The organizers are intended to focus on the key elements of character, setting, conflict, and resolution development. Students can develop multiple characters, for example, in preparation for writing their own fiction, or they may reflect on and further develop characters from stories they have read. By identifying story characters, plot, setting, problem and solution, students read carefully to learn the details. There are many different types of story map graphic organizers. The most basic focus on the beginning, middle, and end of the story. More advanced organizers focus more on plot or character traits.

Procedure:

1. With any new organizer, the teacher should explicitly model how to complete one by using a mentor text or a prompt to fill out a story map.
2. Students may also benefit from completing a story map in a small group before completing one independently.
3. Story maps can be simple or complex depending on the map. The attached resources show examples of simple and complex story maps.

Attachment/Resources:

- http://www.readingrockets.org/pdfs/storymap_simple2.pdf
- http://www.readingrockets.org/pdfs/storymap_simple.pdf
- http://www.readingrockets.org/pdfs/storymap_complex.pdf
- http://www.readingrockets.org/pdfs/storymap_complex2.pdf
- http://www.readingrockets.org/pdfs/storymap_complex3.pdf
- http://www.readingrockets.org/pdfs/storymap_complex_scholastic.pdf

Reference/Research:

Reutzel, D.R. (1985). Story maps improve comprehension. *Reading Teacher*, 38(4), 400-404.

Prewriting Think Sheet

Targeted Standards:

W.3.4 - With guidance and support from adults, produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1-3.)

W.4.4 - Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1-3.)

W.5.4 - Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1-3.)

The importance of prewriting is often underestimated, but its function in the writing process is vital. For one, students need to discover what they already know about a given topic. The Prewriting Think Sheet is designed to elicit this type of information through a variety of questions focused on a particular topic. This strategy helps student writers through a maze of knowledge they have about a particular topic, and it helps them see connections within that knowledge.

Procedure:

1. Explain the benefit of students recognizing what they know about a given topic before beginning the drafting process.
2. Introduce Prewriting Think Sheet (located at the link below), and model its use. Model how students can incorporate knowledge that they have already learned in the Prewriting Think Sheet and how they may need to read further to fill in missing details.
3. Students may also work with partners to gather additional information and add to the Think Sheet. Provide opportunities for students to share out to verify their thinking is on the right track.

Attachment/Resources:

Prewriting Think Sheet for Literature

http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/lesson_images/lesson1011/prewriting.pdf

Prewriting Strategy and Idea Exchange from WritingFix

<http://writingfix.com/process/prewrite.htm>

Prewriting worksheet: scroll to access

Reference/Research:

Urquhart, V., & McIver, M. (2005). *Teaching writing in the content areas*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Prewriting Think Sheet

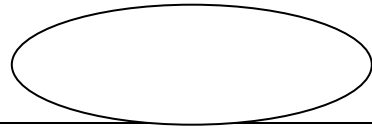
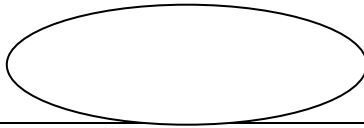
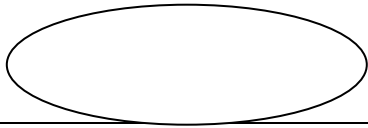
Topic: _____

Who will be my audience?

What is my purpose?

What are some things I already know about this topic?

What are some possible ways to group ideas?



Story Maps

Targeted Standards:

W.3.4 - With guidance and support from adults, produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1-3.)

W.4.4 - Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1-3.)

W.5.4 - Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1-3.)

Story Maps provide one way students to organize the events of a story. A story map is graphic organizer that helps students focus on key elements of a story.

Procedure:

1. Provide students any version of a story map that fits the assigned writing.
2. Model this strategy using a book with very clear components to help students understand each component. (See examples of books in the link below)
3. As a class complete a story map together to create a plan for the story.
4. Use the story map as a springboard to a class story.
5. Once students have had this modeled and practiced as a class or in pairs, they will be able to complete one independently.

Attachment/Resources:

Click here to find graphic organizers, ideas and children's books that help teach story sequencing. http://www.readingrockets.org/strategies/story_sequence

Student Interactive: Story Maps (Scroll down the page to find 20 lessons/units)
<http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/student-interactives/story-30008.html?tab=3>

Reference/Research:

Moss, B. (2005). Making a case and a place for effective content area literacy instruction in the elementary grades. *The Reading Teacher*, 59(1), 46-55.

Reutzel, R. (1985). Story maps improve comprehension. *The Reading Teacher*, 38(4), 400-404.

Text Structure: An Organization Tool for Writing

Targeted Standards:

W.3.4 - With guidance and support from adults, produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1-3.)

W.4.4 - Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1-3.)

W.5.4 - Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1-3.)

Text structure refers to how information within a written text is organized. Not only will teaching students to recognize common text structures help with comprehension, but it can help students organize their own writing.

Procedure:

1. Teach students common nonfiction text structures:
Cause & Effect, Sequential, Problem/Solution, Description, Compare/Contrast
2. Each text structure should be taught individually as students need time to recognize one structure, it's signal words and organization, before learning another.
3. Students may be able to grasp easier text structures like sequence and comparison contrast so teachers may want to teach these structures first. Harder structures for students to grasp are description, cause and effect, and problem solution.
4. Teaching students the various text structures can give students ideas on how to organize their nonfiction writing.
5. After studying the key features and vocabulary of each text structure, students can practice integrating the structures into their own writing.
6. Use resources below to find graphic organizers and other tools to help students organize their writing.

Attachment/Resources:

Idaho Training Clearinghouse offers a concise pamphlet for expository text structures
<http://idahotc.com/Portals/25/District%20Trainings%20and%20Webinars/Elementary%20ELA/H03%20Text%20Structure%20org.pdf>

Scholastic Lesson Plan:

<http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/lesson-plan/teaching-nonfiction-text-structures>

Florida Center for Reading Research Student Activities:

http://www.fcrr.org/studentactivities/c_022c.pdf

Research from Reading Rockets

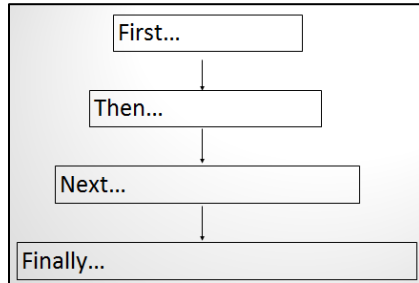
<http://www.readingrockets.org/article/52251>

Reference/Research:

Dymock, S. (2005). Teaching expository text structure awareness. *The Reading Teacher*, 59(2),

Chronological / Sequence Order

Sequence shows the order of things. It describes when something happened, the steps in a sequence, and the logical order of things.



A, B, C	from	present
after	future	presently
afterward	here, there	previously
afterwards	how to	prior
already	immediately	prior to
always	in order	recently
as soon as	in the future	second
at last	in the	sequence
at length	meantime	shortly
at (time)	in the past	since
at that time	initially	soon
at this point	into	subsequently
at this time	last	then
before	lastly	thereafter
currently	later	third
cycle	latter	time
during	new	to this day
earlier	meanwhile	today
early	next	tomorrow
eventually	not long after	ultimately
finally	now	until
first	o'clock	when
following	old	whenever
for one thing	on time	while
former	past	
formerly	preceding	

Questions

- What is the sequence?
- What kind of sequence is used? Time? Logical order? Sequence of events? Step-by-step?
- What are the details and/or examples for each part of the sequence?
- Is there a reason for the sequence?
- What are the major incidents that occur?
- What words does the author use to indicate a sequence?

Location Order / Description

Words and phrases that describe or show location of parts help to "paint a picture" for the reader.

Spatial Words	Description Words
above	after all
across	an instance of this can be seen
along	as
appears to be	as an illustration
as in	by observing
behind	can be recognized by
below	depicts
beside	describes
between	develop
down	e.g.
in back of	features include
in front of	for example
looks like	for instance
near	for one thing
on top of	i.e.
onto	illustrates
outside	in particular
over	like
such as	portray
to the right / left	reason... is that
under	some characteristics are specifically
	such as
	that is
	to illustrate

Questions

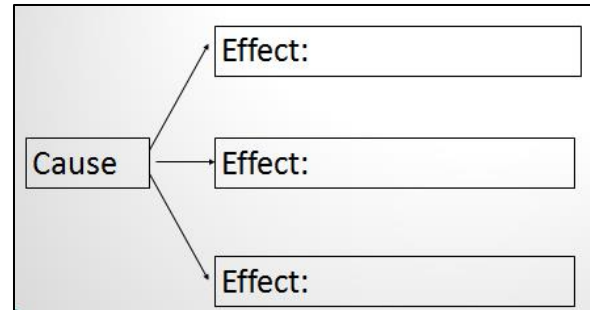
- What specific person, place, thing or event is being described?
- What are its most important attributes or characteristics?
- For each thing being described, what are the details and examples that support the description?
- Would the description change if the order of the attributes were changed?
- Why is this description important?
- How does the description help you see a "picture" in your head?

Cause / Effect Order

The cause tells *WHY* something happened. The effect tells *WHAT* happened as a result. In texts that follow this structure, the reader is told the result of an event or occurrence and the reasons it happened.

Cause <i>WHY something happened</i>	
because	seeing that
being that	source
begins with	when
cause	is caused by...
caused by	the cause is...
due to the fact that	may be due to...
for the simple reason	the reason this
that	happened is
for this reason	on account of (cause),
for as much as	this
gives rise to	since (cause) happened...
if this happens	this (cause) led to...
in as much as	actions leading to
in that	(effect) included...
in view of the fact that	because (cause)
leads to	happened
led to	as a result of (cause)...
may be due to	when ___ happened, ...
now that	for this reason
origin	
owing to the fact that	
reason	

Questions
➤ <i>What process or subject is being explained?</i>
➤ <i>What is the product or end result of the process; or what is the outcome of the events?</i>
➤ <i>What happened?</i>
➤ <i>Why did it happen?</i>
➤ <i>To whom or what did it happen?</i>
➤ <i>When did it happen?</i>
➤ <i>What brought about the action?</i>
➤ <i>What else happened because of that event?</i>
➤ <i>Is there more than one cause?</i>
➤ <i>If there is more than one cause, is one more powerful than the others?</i>
➤ <i>What was the cause?</i>
➤ <i>What are the details and examples that explain the causes?</i>

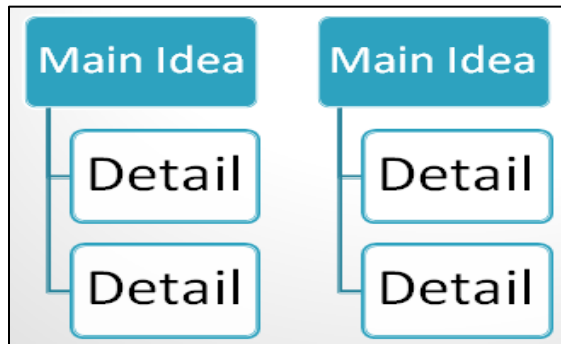


Effect <i>WHAT happened</i>	
accordingly	it follows then
all in all	impact is
as a result of	impact will be
on account of	leads / led to
as a consequence	may be due to
as a result of	namely
as might be expected	outcome
because	result
because of this	results in
begins with	since
consequence	so
consequently	so that
due to	then
effect	therefore
effects of	thereupon
for this reason	thus
finally	this (cause) led to...
happened	this happened because...
hence	because of
if... then	as a consequence,
impact	(effect) happened
in consequence	as a result, (effect)
in order to	happened
is caused by	this led to (effect)
it follows that	when
	this results in

Questions
➤ <i>What is the outcome of the events?</i>
➤ <i>What is the impact?</i>
➤ <i>Who or what is effected?</i>
➤ <i>What are the details and examples that show the effect?</i>
➤ <i>Was there one effect or more than one?</i>
➤ <i>If there was more than one effect, was one stronger or more important than the others?</i>
➤ <i>What are the consequences?</i>

Order of Importance or Generalization / Principle

Explains the parts of an idea or the main idea and details. This structure resembles an outline. Each section opens with its main idea, then elaborates on it, sometimes dividing the elaboration into subsections.

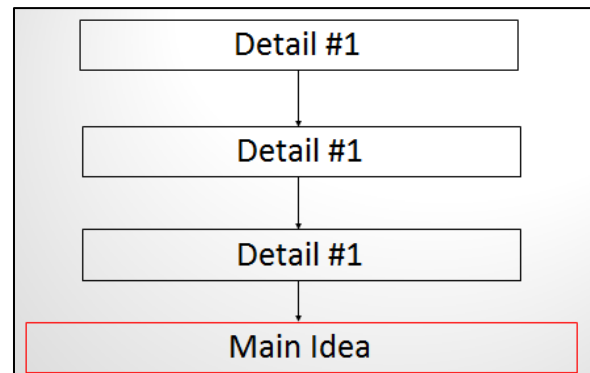


additionally always because of clearly conclusively first for instance for example furthermore generally however	in fact it could be argued that moreover most convincing never not only ... but also often that is therefore truly typically
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Questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What generalizations is the author making or what principle is being explained? ➤ What facts, examples, statistics, and expert opinion are given that support the generalization or that explain the principle? ➤ Does the author present some details as more important than others? ➤ Are enough facts, examples, statistics, and expert opinion included to clearly support or explain the generalization / principle?

Least Important to Most Important Order

Details, examples and ideas are organized from least important to most important (or vice versa).

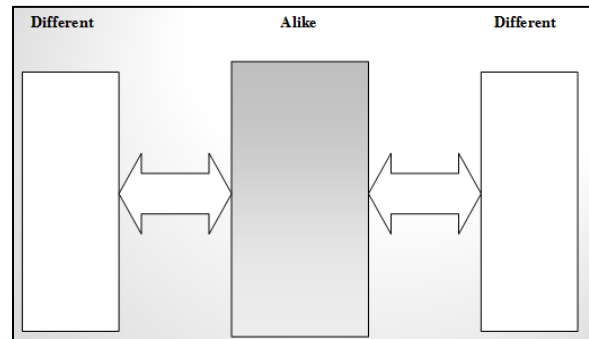


additionally conclusively consequently clearly furthermore moreover not only ... but also therefore	finally first first and foremost most importantly lastly the main point
--	--

Questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ How does the author "lead up" to the main point? ➤ How do you know which details contribute to the main points? ➤ Are there enough details to lead to the main point in a logical fashion? ➤ Why does the author rank certain details as more important than others?

Comparison / Contrast Order

When two or more things are **compared**, the author shows how they are **alike or similar**. When two or more things are **contrasted**, the author shows how they are **different**. (Contrasting does not always mean good vs. bad. It can mean how one thing is simply different than another.)



Comparison	
How two or more things are ALIKE	
alike	in similar fashion
along the same lines	just as
also	just like
at the same time	least
and	less than
as	like
as well as	likewise
both	more than
by the same token	most important
can be compared	neither
comparable	resemble
comparatively	same
compare	same as
correspondingly	share
each	similar
equal, equally	similar to
even	similarly
in common	the same
in comparison	the same as
in like manner	too
in the same manner	twin
in the same way	

Contrast	
How two or more things are DIFFERENT	
although	neither / nor
and yet	nevertheless
as opposed to	nonetheless
better	on the contrary
but	on the other hand
by contrast	opposite
conversely	otherwise
despite	regardless
difference	still
different	though
different than / from	unequal
differently	unless
either / or	unlike
even though	variations
however	vary
in contrast	whereas
instead	while
former / latter	yet
more / less than	

Questions
➤ What two or more things are being compared?
➤ What feature or features of the things are being compared? What is it about them that is being compared?
➤ What characteristics do they have in common; how are these items alike?
➤ In what ways are these things alike?
➤ In what ways are _____ and _____ similar?
➤ What conclusions does the author reach about the degree of similarity between the items?
➤ What words provide clues to the similarity between /among the items?
➤ What qualities of each thing correspond to one another? In what way?

Questions
➤ What two or more things are being contrasted?
➤ What feature or features of the things are being compared? What is it about them that is being compared?
➤ How do the things being contrasted differ?
➤ In what ways are these things different?
➤ In what ways are _____ and _____ different?
➤ What conclusions does the author reach about the degree of difference between the items?
➤ What words provide clues to the difference between /among the items?
➤ What qualities of each thing correspond to one another? In what way?

Classification Order

Classification involved grouping items together by commonalities. The author uses classification to help the reader understand the concept being explained.

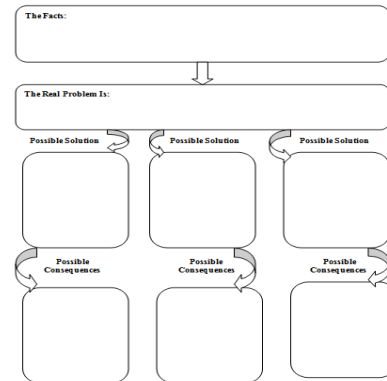
Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5

Classification Signal Words	
another example is...	put another way
example of	one example is...
group	that is
for instance	thus
in other words	usually
is characterized by	same as
member of	such as

Questions
➤ How are the items in the text grouped?
➤ What characteristics define the groupings?
➤ Why did the author group the items as they are organized?
➤ How does the grouping of the items help you understand the concept?
➤ What is important about the characteristics used to organize the items?

Problem / Solution Order

Text organized by problem / solution order help tell about a problem or issue, why there is a problem or issue, and then gives one or more possible solutions.



Problem / Solution Signal Words	
Problem	Solution
conundrum	answer
dilemma	consequently
factor	possibility
issue	proposition
problem	recommendation
problematic	solution
puzzle	remedy
quandary	resolution
question	one way to resolve this
reason	is _____
situation	one answer to this is _____
this is a problem	potential solutions
because _____	include _____

Questions
➤ What is the problem?
➤ Why is this a problem?
➤ How long has this been a problem?
➤ To whom or what is this a problem?
➤ What are the details related to the problem?
➤ How serious is the problem or issue?
➤ Who or what is involved in the problem?
➤ What are the causes of the problem?
➤ Can the problem be solved, resolved or just reduced?
➤ What is a solution for the problem?
➤ What resources are needed to solve the problem?
➤ What must happen in order for the problem to be solved?
➤ Is there a process for solving the problem?
➤ What is the evidence that the solution will likely be successful?

TREE: Staying on Topic

Targeted Standards:

W.3.4 - With guidance and support from adults, produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1-3.)

W.4.4 - Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1-3.)

W.5.4 - Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1-3.)

In order to achieve clarity and coherence, students must stay on topic. The TREE strategy is one method to help students to examine their writing to ensure it is on topic.

Procedure:

Topic identification:

1. Clearly identify the topic of the paper you are writing. Make sure that your title clearly reflects this topic.
2. Make sure that it is a topic that is wide enough to get information on and not too wide that there will be too much information

React to each paragraph:

1. Examine each paragraph of the paper in relationship to the topic. Either do this as you write the paper, or do it after you have written the paper.
2. Ask yourself why this paragraph is included in the paper and how the paper would be without this paragraph. If it does not seem to be closely related, drop it or revise it.

Examine each sentence in each paragraph:

1. As you write each paragraph or after you have written a paragraph, read it and ask yourself if each sentence is related to the topic sentence of the paragraph.
2. If a sentence does not seem to be related to the topic of the paragraph, then either drop it or try to change it so that it is related to the topic.

End:

1. Write a concluding paragraph or read the one that you have already written, and ask yourself if it summarizes the main ideas of the paper or comes to a conclusion based on the information presented in the paper.
2. Make sure that you do not introduce any new information that has not been covered before.
3. If the ending includes information that is not relevant, drop it.

Attachment/Resources:

N/A

Reference/Research:

Adapted and retrieved from Learning Toolbox. Steppingstone Technology Grant. James Madison University, MSC 1903, Harrisonburg, VA 22807.

Introduction to Blogs

Targeted Standards:

W.3.6 – With guidance and support from adults, use technology to produce and publish writing (using keyboarding skills) as well as to interact and collaborate with others.

W.4.6 – With some guidance and support from adults, use technology, including the internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of one page in a single setting.

W.5.6 - With some guidance and support from adults, use technology, including the internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of two pages in a single setting.

A blog is a public forum that students can use to express viewpoints and share expertise with classmates and others. A blog gives students meaningful purpose with an authentic audience.

Procedure:

1. Ask students to tell you what they know about blogging.
2. Tell them the word “blog” is short for the word “weblog”.
3. On a smart board, show students a blog site. (4th Grade sample blog: <http://4kmand4kj.global2.vic.edu.au/>)
4. The classroom blog in the link above is between two classes but also has links to individual student blogs that can be read and discussed as a class.
5. Ask students what types of entries they enjoyed reading. Ask them what they think makes a good blog entry and why. Discuss whether it is important to pay attention to grammar in a blog comment, even though it may be short.
6. Allow students to explore other blogs (in pairs or small groups). See link in attachment.
7. Have students share what they found interesting in the blog they explored.
8. See resources below for next steps in using blogs in the classroom.

Attachment/Resources:

Blogging in the Primary Grades? Yes Indeed!

<http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/blogging-primary-grades-indeed-31058.html>

Best of Blogs: Writing Strategies

<http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/top-teaching/2014/06/best-blogs-writing-strategies>

Kidblog: Build for Teachers

<http://kidblog.org/home/>

A Collection of Class Blogs:

<http://www.literacyshed.com/class-blogs-shed.html>

Reference/Research:

Lacina, J., & Griffith, R. (2012). Blogging as a means of crafting writing. *The Reading Teacher*, 66(4), 316–320.

Word Processing

Targeted Standards:

W.3.6 – With guidance and support from adults, use technology to produce and publish writing (using keyboarding skills) as well as to interact and collaborate with others.

W.4.6 – With some guidance and support from adults, use technology, including the internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of one page in a single setting.*

W.5.6 - With some guidance and support from adults, use technology, including the internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of two pages in a single setting.*

Word-processing programs can make many aspects of the writing process easier for students, including assisting students with spelling and handwriting difficulties to write more fluently.

Teaching typing can help students compose more easily on a computer, a skill that is increasingly necessary as computer-based technologies are used throughout daily life.

Instruction in typing should be accompanied by instruction in how to use a word processor.

Procedure:

1. Guide students through the basic skills involved in using a word processor, such as launching the program; opening and saving files; and adding, moving, and deleting text.
2. Provide guidance about how word-processing programs are part of the writing process. Teachers can demonstrate editing features of word-processing programs. However, spelling and grammar checks, can be “turned off” during the brainstorming and drafting phase so that students are not distracted by basic writing skills; instead, they can focus on conveying their ideas.
3. Word processing also can increase the ease of editing which results in better revision and can also be particularly helpful to low-achieving writers by enabling them to produce text accurately and fluently.

*[The New Illinois Learning Standards](#) require students in grades 4 and 5 to “demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of one (4th) and two (5th) pages in a single setting.” The keyboarding is meant to be done in a single sitting, whereas the other skills mentioned in standard 6 (use of technology, publishing interacting and collaborating) could occur over multiple days or weeks.

Attachment/Resources:

Teaching Elementary School Students to Be Effective Writers (pg. 32)

<http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED533112.pdf>

Reference/Research:

Jones, I. (1994). The effect of the word processor on the written composition of second-grade pupils. *Computers in the Schools*, 11(2), 43–54.

Read, Cover, Remember, Write

Targeted Standards:

W.3.7 –Conduct short research projects that build knowledge about a topic.

W.4.7 - Conduct short research projects that build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.

W.5.7 –Conduct short research projects that use several sources to build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.

When students are conducting research, being able to take notes is a necessary skill. Teaching students to take notes and not just copy down words is vital to getting students to write their own research in their own words. Remind students that we need to be able to remember what we have read to become experts on a topic. One way to do this is to pause and think before jotting down ideas.

Procedure:

1. Choose a short segment of text.
2. Read aloud the segment, cover it up with your hand and pause to think aloud what you learned. Tell students to not read more than their hand will cover at one time.
3. Jot down (chart paper, overhead, etc...) what you learned letting all students see your notes. Emphasize to students that you can't remember everything so...
4. Reread the segment to see what information may have been forgotten. Remind students that notes do not require complete sentences, correct spelling, etc. as the point is to quickly get their thinking down.
5. Follow steps #1 and #2 again.

Caution: Students may sometimes begin to ramble on and list every detail. Remind them to avoid writing complete sentences and smaller words/articles such as a, and or the. Some students may need the teacher to limit a note to a specific number of words. This strategy helps students avoid plagiarism.

Read, Cover, Remember, Write has been adapted from Linda Hoyt's reading strategy entitled "Read, Cover, Remember, Retell".

Attachment/Resources:

Video: Note-Taking with Sticky Notes (5th Grade)

<https://www.teachingchannel.org/videos/enhance-student-note-taking>

Reference/Research:

Hoyt, L. (2009). *Revisit, reflect, retell: Time-tested strategies for teaching reading comprehension* (Revised/Expanded ed.). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Red Light, Yellow Light, Green Light

Targeted Standards:

W.3.7 –Conduct short research projects that build knowledge about a topic.

W.4.7 - Conduct short research projects that build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.

W.5.7 –Conduct short research projects that use several sources to build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.

The internet helps writers find information fast. Internet users need to evaluate the websites and information they gather before using it to gather research information.

Procedure:

1. Divide students into small groups.
2. Assign each small group a website to evaluate around topics that will be of interest to them and what they will be learning. Give each group a form with the information listed below.
3. Ask each group to fill out the form (or any version of this form) and then assign a color to it. They may shade the box with the color they choose. Green means “go”. The website has valid information and is from a reliable source. Yellow means “caution”. Not all pieces of information on the form have been located, but much of it looks good. Red means “stop”. There are too many unknowns about this website. It is not to be used.
4. Have each group share their findings.

Make sure to give one group a website that is a fake. One example is the Pacific Northwest Tree Octopus. <http://zapatopi.net/treeoctopus/> This site was created to show students how something that looks real, could actually be fake.

Website	Information	Red Light, Yellow Light, Green Light
URL		
Established by		
Purpose		
Content		
Authorship		
Cite Evaluation		

Attachment/Resources:

You've Been Cited: Valid Internet Sources for Student

Research http://www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/valid_internet_sources_for_student_research.shtml#sthash.6Thc5HvJ.dpuf

Characteristics of Reliable Sources and Note-Taking Form for Students

<http://www-tc.pbs.org/now/classroom/acrobat/lesson07.pdf>

University of Illinois Library

<http://www.library.illinois.edu/ugl/howdoi/webeval.html>

Reference/Research:

Lehman, C. (2012). *Energize research reading and writing: Fresh strategies to spark interest, develop independence, and meet key common core standards, grades 4-8*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Marking Sources

Targeted Standards:

W.3.8 – Recall information from experiences or gather information from print and digital sources, take brief notes on sources and sort evidence into provided categories.

W.4.8 - Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; take notes and categorize information, and provide a list of sources.

W.5.8 - Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; summarize or paraphrase information in notes and finished work, and provide a list of sources.

“Marking” is a useful tool for students to use as they gather research. Marking involves students organizing and annotating materials. Model the use of “marking sources” as a whole group till students feel comfortable with each tool.

Print Sources

Students directly mark text with sticky note or highlighter. They can also write brief notes or visuals next to the text.

Procedure:

1. Choose a research topic, research question and a source.
2. Demonstrate the process with your students beginning with marking one source with one material (highlighter, sticky note, highlighting tape)
3. “Think aloud” as to why you are marking the paragraph, photo, etc...
4. Have students practice in pairs or small groups marking a text with different materials.

Digital sources

Students need to learn to mark digital sources as well as print sources. Printing a digital source is one option for marking information. Start small. Choose a webpage to show students.

Procedure:

1. Choose a research topic, research question and a webpage/website.
2. When finding research that will help answer a question, model how to save, bookmark, or store material – one document at a time.
3. Show students how to use electronic highlighting and digital sticky notes (one tool at a time) to annotate important parts of the text to be included in the research.

There are a number of tools that are available for educators in marking digital text. See “Cool Tools for School” link below.

Attachment/Resources:

Cool Tools for Schools

<http://cooltoolsforschools.wikispaces.com/Collaborative+Tools>

Reference/Research:

Coskie, T. L., & Hornof, M. (2013). E-BEST principles: Infusing technology into the writing workshop. *The Reading Teacher*, 67(1), 54–58.

Structured Note Taking

Targeted Standards:

W.3.8 – Recall information from experiences or gather information from print and digital sources, take brief notes on sources and sort evidence into provided categories.

W.4.8 - Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; take notes and categorize information, and provide a list of sources.

W.5.8 - Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; summarize or paraphrase information in notes and finished work, and provide a list of sources.

Structured note taking helps students take notes more effectively and assists them in recalling and retaining information. Note taking is a valuable skill when students are gathering information from sources.

When initially teaching structured note taking, teachers create the graphic organizer. As students become more comfortable with using structured notes they are able to construct their own, matching the structure of their graphic organizer to the structure of the texts they read.

Procedure:

1. Provide students with a graphic organizer that matches the organizational pattern (cause/effect, sequential, description, compare/contrast, definition, or problem/solution) in the text to be read. (See link below for graphic organizers).
2. Make certain that the examples clearly exemplify the structure. Point out cue words and phrases. (Cue words and phrases found at link below).
3. As students read and complete the organizer, have them discuss their responses as a whole group or within their small groups. Remind students to focus their discussion on any questions where student answers differ.
4. Taking notes onto a graphic organizer allows students to record information and then be able to write research in their own words from notes.
5. Repeat the process with each of the other organizational structures and corresponding graphic organizers when appropriate.

Attachment/Resources:

Text Structured Graphic Organizers, Signal Words

<http://www.dayofreading.org/DOR10HO/expository%20short%20texts.pdf>

Reference/Research:

Smith, P., & Tompkins, G. (1988). Structured notetaking: A new strategy for content area teachers. *Journal of Reading*, 32, 46-53.

Evidence Scavenger Hunt

Targeted Standards:

W.3.9 –Begins in grade 4.

W.4.9 - Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. (Apply grade 4 Reading standards to literature and informational texts)

W.5.9 - Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. (Apply grade 5 Reading standards to literature and informational texts)

When drawing evidence from text, students are expected to go beyond describing or repeating the information by analyzing, reflecting and or using it. A fun way to have students find evidence in a text is to make it a game or "scavengers hunt." The questions asked on the hunt will determine the level of thinking required.

Procedure:

1. Model for students how to collect evidence. Provide a question (one that aligns to the reading standards) that is specific to the text. Have students watch you highlight or write the answer you find in the text. Demonstrate a variety of different types of questions using the reading standards as a guide to the type of questions.
2. Ask students in pairs or small groups to find evidence. Begin these challenges with the literal, where students can find nearly the exact words of the challenge in the text, and move on to the interpretive, where they need to infer meaning from the text.

For example:

"Find a line that shows the main character is;"

"Find a picture that shows what effects the oil spill"

"Find the evidence that gives you the meaning of the word..."

"Why do you think the author told the story..."

3. Have each small group "share out" their evidence. Then encourage text-based evidence discussions when groups share different pieces of evidence.

Attachment/Resources:

Grounded in Evidence - Part 1: Fiction

<http://www.readingrockets.org/blog/55458>

Grounded in Evidence – Part 2/Informational Text

<http://www.readingrockets.org/blog/55532>

Grounded in evidence. Part 3: Constructed responses based on evidence

<http://www.readingrockets.org/blog/55747>

Reference/Research:

Fisher D. & Frey N. (2013). Show me the proof: Requiring evidence in student responses.

Principal Leadership, 13(7). 57-61.

Good Questions = Evidence

Targeted Standards:

W.3.9 –Begins in grade 4.

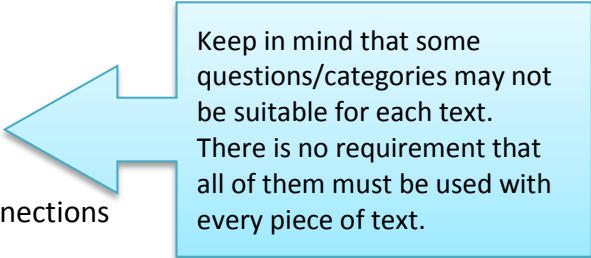
W.4.9 - Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. (Apply grade 4 Reading standards to literature and informational texts)

W.5.9 - Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. (Apply grade 5 Reading standards to literature and informational texts)

Standard 9 requires students to draw evidence from texts. Teachers can structure questions in several ways so that students must return to the text to find evidence for their responses.

Procedure:

1. Select text that students will read.
2. Pre-read the text to determine the types of questions that students will need to draw evidence from.
3. Structure the questions from explicit to implicit using the following six categories:
 1. General Understandings
 2. Key Details
 3. Vocabulary and Text Structure
 4. Author's Purpose
 5. Inferences
 6. Opinions, Arguments, Intertextual Connections



Keep in mind that some questions/categories may not be suitable for each text. There is no requirement that all of them must be used with every piece of text.

See resources below for more information.

Attachment/Resources:

Achieve the Core Text Dependent Questions Resources

<http://achievethecore.org/page/46/complete-guide-to-creating-text-dependent-questions-detail-pg>

Text-Based Questions Video

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0ZfHMTlqSq4>

International Reading Association Article: Engaging the Adolescent Learner: Text Dependent Questions –http://www.dcc-cde.ca.gov/documents/anita%20archer%20-%202013/etal_text-dependent_questions.pdf

Reference/Research:

Fisher, D., & Frey, N. (2012). *Teaching students to read like detectives: Comprehending, analyzing, and discussing text*. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree Press.

GIST

Targeted Standards:

W.3.10 - Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

W.4.10 - Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

W.5.10 - Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

GIST is an acronym for Generating Interactions between Schemata and Texts. This strategy was created to help students write well organized summaries.

Procedure:

1. Model this strategy with a piece of text.
2. Read the first paragraph to the class. Ask students to write a summary of the first sentence in 15 words or less.
3. Write the class summary on the board.
4. Read the second paragraph and ask students to write a summary of the first two summaries in 15 words or less.
5. Write the group summary on the board asking students to take all of what has been read so far and create a 15 word summary from the 2 previous 15 word summaries.

Attachment/Resources:

GIST Template

http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/lesson_images/lesson290/Template.pdf

GIST Resources

<http://wvde.state.wv.us/strategybank/GISTStrategy.html>

Reference/Research:

Cunningham, J. (1982). Generating interactions between schemata and text. In J. A. Niles & L. A. Harris (Eds.), *New inquiries in reading research and instruction* (pp. 42–47). Washington, DC: National Reading Conference.

Quick Write/Quick Draw

Targeted Standards:

W.3.10 - Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

W.4.10 - Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

W.5.10 - Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Quick Write/Quick Draw is a literacy strategy that gives students the opportunity to reflect on what they have learned. The idea is for students to write as much as they can during a timed period. The amount of time depends on the age of student as well as the prompt.

Procedure:

1. Model this strategy before students try it.
2. The teacher selects a topic related to the text being studied and defines the purpose for the Quick Write / Quick Draw.
3. On the right side of the organizer, students respond to a question or prompt related to the text by writing down whatever comes to their minds without organizing it too much or worrying about grammar.
4. On the left side of the graphic organizer students are to draw an illustration of the topic. There are many different ways to draw an illustration. Have students help you think of ways to draw to show understanding of the text.

Variations:

- Summarize what was learned or applied
- Connect to background information or students' lives
- Explain content concepts or vocabulary
- Make predictions, inferences, and hypotheses
- Pose a question that addresses a key point in the reading selection

Attachment/Resources:

Read Write Think Sheet:

http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/lesson_images/lesson1053/quick_write_draw.pdf

Graphic Organizer:

<http://www.monroe.k12.ky.us/userfiles/1029/file/QuickWriteQuickDraw.pdf>

Reference/Research:

Jonson, K. (2006). *60 strategies for improving reading comprehension in grades K-8*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.